

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SY-04 USSS-00 SCCT-02 OMB-01 NIC-01

SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 EB-11

DOTE-00 DRC-01 /121 W

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R 231752Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4469

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: DEPUTY PUBLIC PROSECUTOR KIDNAPPED IN GENOA

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: CHRONIC PUBLIC DISMAY OVER APPARENTLY DECLINING STATE OF PUBLIC ORDER HAS BEEN SHARPLY AROUSED BY RECENT KIDNAPPING OF DEPUTY PUBLIC PROSECUTOR IN GENOA BY LEFTIST EXTREMISTS. UNPRECEDENTEDLY LARGE POLICE EFFORT IS THUS FAR UNFRUITFUL. POPULAR CONCERN HAS BEEN FURTHER AGGRAVATED BY DYNAMITING, APPARENTLY BY EXTREME RIGHTISTS, OF MAJOR NORTH-SOUTH RAIL LINE APRIL 21, WHICH COULD HAVE CAUSED MAJOR CATASTROPHE. END SUMMARY.

2. ITALIAN DEPUTY PUBLIC PROSECUTOR FOR GENOA, MARIO SOSSI, WAS KIDNAPPED EVENING OF APRIL 18 BY GUNMEN LATER IDENTIFIED BY LEAFLET AS MEMBERS OF EXTREME LEFT "RED BRIGADES". FURTHER LEAFLETS CIRCULATED APRIL 22 REPORTED THAT SOSSI BEING TRIED BY "REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL" FOR CRIMES AGAINST THE PROLETARIAT. SOSSI IS WELL KNOWN THROUGHOUT ITALY FOR HIS CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL VIEWS AND AGGRESSIVE INVESTIGATIONS OF TWO EXTREMIST GROUPS OF THE LEFT: THE RED BRIGADES AND THE "22 OCTOBER GROUP". THROUGH SOSSI'S EFFORTS "22 OCTOBER GROUP" WAS EFFECTIVELY DESTROYED IN 1972 AND ONE MEMBER SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT FOR KILLING A

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BANK MESSENGER IN A HOLD-UP. HOWEVER, SOSSI'S EARLIER INVESTIGA-

TION OF THE RED BRIGADES, FALTERED BADLY AFTER INITIAL PUBLICITY AND THOSE ARRESTED WERE LATER RELEASED.

3. POLICE HAVE LAUNCHED UNPRECEDENTEDLY LARGE BUT STILL UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORT TO APPREHEND KIDNAPPERS INCLUDING USE OF SOME 4,000 POLICE AND CARABINIERI AND SEVERAL HELICOPTERS. SEARCH REMAINS CONCENTRATED IN GENOA AREA IN BELIEF THAT RAPIDITY WITH WHICH POLICE SEALED OFF CITY PROBABLY PREVENTED MOVEMENT OF VICTIM ELSEWHERE.

4. ON APRIL 21 LARGE EXPLOSIVE CHARGE DESTROYED MAIN NORTH/SOUTH RAIL LINE OUTSIDE OF FLORENCE SECONDS BEFORE PASSAGE OF PARIS/ROME EXPRESS TRAIN. MAJOR TRAGEDY WAS AVERTED ONLY BY LUCK AND CREW ALERTNESS. POLICE INVESTIGATORS BELIEVE SABOTAGE WAS WORK OF EXTREME RIGHTISTS CONNECTED WITH NOW-OUTLAWED "ORDINE NUOVE". HOWEVER, NO ARRESTS HAVE YET BEEN MADE.

5. COMMENT: KIDNAPPING HAS BECOME AN INCREASINGLY FREQUENT WEAPON OF POLITICAL EXTREMISTS IN ITALY, BUT THIS IS FIRST SUCCESSFUL SEIZURE OF MAJOR PUBLIC OFFICIAL. HEAVY POLICE REACTION REFLECTS GOVERNMENT'S ANGER AND FRUSTRATION AS WELL AS NEED TO MAKE MAJOR SHOW OF LAW ENFORCEMENT IN FACE OF DIRECT AFFRONT TO ITALIAN SYSTEM OF JUSTICE. CRIME HAS GREATLY EMBARRASSED SOCIALISTS AND OTHERS WHO HERETOFORE HAVE PURSUED SOFT LINE TOWARD FAR-LEFT EXTREMISTS, AND WHO NOW IMPLY DEED TO BE PROVOCATION CALCULATED TO CAUSE TURBULENCE DURING DELICATE REFERENDUM PERIOD, TO RESULTANT BENEFIT OF FAR-RIGHT. APPARENT RIGHT-WING INVOLVEMENT IN UNRELATED RAILWAY SABOTAGE IS BEING CONSTRUED TO BUTTRESS THIS THEORY, BUT IN POPULAR EYE PROBABLY ONLY ENFORCES DISTASTE FOR BOTH EXTREMES. VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARAMILITARY FORCES, KIDNAPPING, POLITICAL SITUATION, CIVIL DISORDERS, POLICE INVESTIGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ROME05659
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740096-0164
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740421/aaaaasli.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <08-Aug-2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPUTY PUBLIC PROSECUTOR KIDNAPPED IN GENOA
TAGS: PINT, IT, (SOSSI, MARIO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005